

Message Text

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ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 /056 W

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R 210915Z OCT 76

FM AMEMBASSY TOKYO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3122

INFO AMEMBASSY SEOUL

AMEMBASSY TAIPEI

AMCONSUL HONG KONG

USLO PEKING

CINCPAC HONOLULU

COMUSJAPAN YOKOTA

C O N F I D E N T I A L TOKYO 15815

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, JA

SUBJECT: LDP LEADERSHIP STRUGGLE

REF: TOKYO 15734

SUMMARY. ANTI-MIKI LDP DIETMEN MET AND AGREED TODAY TO SUPPORT FUKUDA CANDIDACY TO SUCCEED MIKI. ANTI-MIKI FORCES HAVE SUCCEEDED IN MOUNTING IMPRESSIVE DISPLAY OF UNITY, BUT FUKUDA WILL NOT MOVE OFFICIALLY TO DECLARE HIS CANDIDACY IN TIME FOR OCTOBER 31 LDP CONVENTION AS FEELING IS STRONG IN PARTY THAT UNSEEMLY CLASH SHOULD BE AVOIDED. END SUMMARY.

1. SOME 240 ANTI-MIKI LDP DIETMENT OR PROXIES MET OCTOBER 21 AM TO RATIFY AGREEMENT ALREADY REACHED BY ANTI-MIKI PARTY LEADERSHIP TO UNITE BEHIND A FUKUDA CANDIDACY TO SUCCEED MIKI AS PARTY PRESIDENT AND PRIME MINISTER. MEETING ALSO APPROVED DECLARATION STATING THAT A REBIRTH OF THE PARTY WAS IMPOSSIBLE UNDER MIKI
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LEADERSHIP, AND CALLING FOR DISSOLUTION OF FACTIONS AND

MIKI'S REPLACEMENT.

2. QUESTION OF WHETHER FUKUDA SHOULD FORMALLY DECLARE HIS CANDIDACY FOR PARTY PRESIDENCY AND PUSH FOR ISSUE TO BE PLACED ON AGENDA OF OCTOBER 31 LDP CONVENTION WAS TAKEN UP AT YET ANOTHER MEETING OF PARTY ELDERS OCTOBER 21. PREDICTABLY, SHIINA AND FUNADA PRESSED HIM TO DO SO, BUT FINMIN OHIRA AND ELDER HORI COUNSELED CAUTION, STRESSING DESIRABILITY OF CONDUCTING SMOOTH CONVENTION IN IMMEDIATE PRE-ELECTION PERIOD. PARTY RULES REQUIRE THAT SUCH DECLARATION BE MADE TEN DAYS IN ADVANCE OF CONVENTION, AND OUR SOURCES INFORM US THAT FUKUDA WILL NOT MAKE A FORMAL DECLARATION WITHIN THIS DEADLINE EVEN THOUGH HIS RESIGNATION BEFORE CONVENTION IS STILL CONCEIVABLE.

3. FOLLOWING DIETMEN'S CAUCUS, MIKI CALLED MEETING OF CONVENTION PREPARATION COMMITTEE TO DISCUSS PLANNING FOR CONVENTION AND IT WAS AGREED THAT CONVENTION SHOULD BE CONDUCTED "SMOOTHLY," I.E., THAT PARTY PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION ITEM SHOULD NOT BE PLACED ON AGENDA. SHIINA ATTENDED MEETING, BUT IS REPORTED TO HAVE RAISED NO OBJECTIONS.

4. UPSHOT OF DAY'S ROUND OF ACTIVITY IS THAT, WHILE ANTI-MIKI FORCES HAVE BEEN ABLE TO MOUNT AN IMPRESSIVE PUBLIC DISPLAY OF UNITY BEHIND A FUKUDA SUCCESSION, FEAR OF A MESSY PRE-ELECTION CONVENTION HAS FORCED THEM TO DELAY DECISIVE ACTION, MOST PROBABLY UNTIL AFTER THE GENERAL ELECTION.
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